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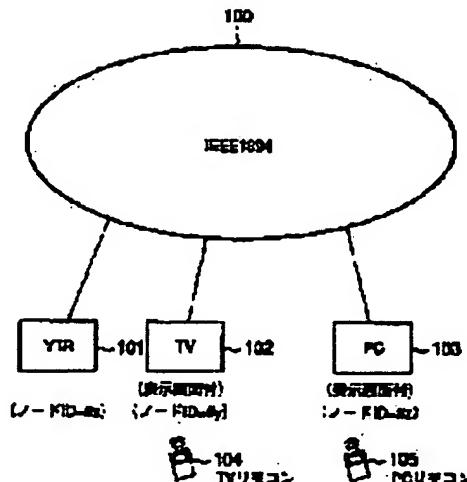
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OKAMOTO TOSHIO**(54) COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT****(57) Abstract:**

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To improve the effectiveness of user support by judging the number of devices possessing a control right with respect to the obtaining request of the control right to its own communication equipment connected to a network and reporting the propriety of obtaining the control right by whether the number amounts reach a prescribed number.

SOLUTION: In the case when a user remote-controls a VTR 101 through the screen of a television set 102, he/she requests a control panel following a constitution information request through an IEEE1394 bus 100 to display a control picture on a display and in order to obtain the control right of the VTR 101, he/she executes a simultaneous use counter decrement request. When decrement is OK, the VTR 101 reports the effect. On the other hand, when the user who uses a PC 103 requests the control right of the VTR 101, at the time of confirming the TV 102 to be in the middle of using with a decrement counter value being 0, NG is reported. When decrement is possible or there is another transferable equipment, the equipment is deleted from a user's list and PC 103 is registered to inform PC 103 of decrement OK.

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Japanese Publication for Unexamined Patent Application**No. 196636-2000 (Tokukai 2000-196636)****A. Relevance of the above-identified Document**

This document has relevance to all independent claims of the present application.

B. Translation of the Relevant Passages of the Document**[EMBODIMENTS]****[0048]**

Here, "control right" is a right for controlling the device. A mechanism described later enables whether there is any control right or not to be determined.

[0049]

The TV102 transmits a simultaneous usage counter decrement request (S407) to the VTR101. The request includes a node ID (or EU164) of the sending end device (TV102) under some condition (for example, the node ID is included as a sending end address of a packet for example).

[0050]

In case where the simultaneous usage counter value is 1 or more, the VTR101 that has received this decreases the counter value, and registers an address (node ID = #y) of the sending end device (TV102) that has sent the simultaneous usage counter

decrement request into the user list (S408), and notifies that the simultaneous usage counter decrement request resulted in success as a reply (S409).

[0068]

(2) In case of exchanging the AV stream with the device (VTR101), or in case where merely a certain time has passed after exchanging the AV stream

(3) In case of exchanging the control command with the device (VTR101), or in case where merely a certain time has passed after exchanging the control command

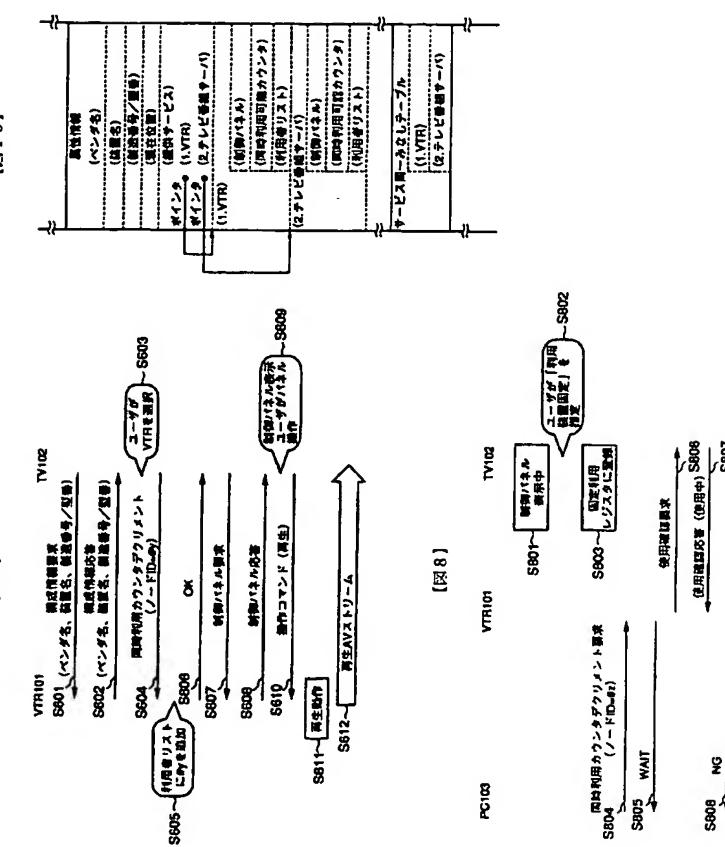
[0094]

A control protocol (referred to also as an infrared ray protocol), represented by IrDa or control Ir, which is defined in an infrared ray, is used between the remote controller and each of the devices. While, as described in Embodiment 1, in IEEE1394 bus 100, a control protocol (referred to as 1394 protocol) defined in IEEE1394 (or internet protocol) such as AV/C or the like is used. Thus, protocol conversion is carried out between the former protocol (infrared ray protocol) and the latter protocol (referred to as 1394 protocol).

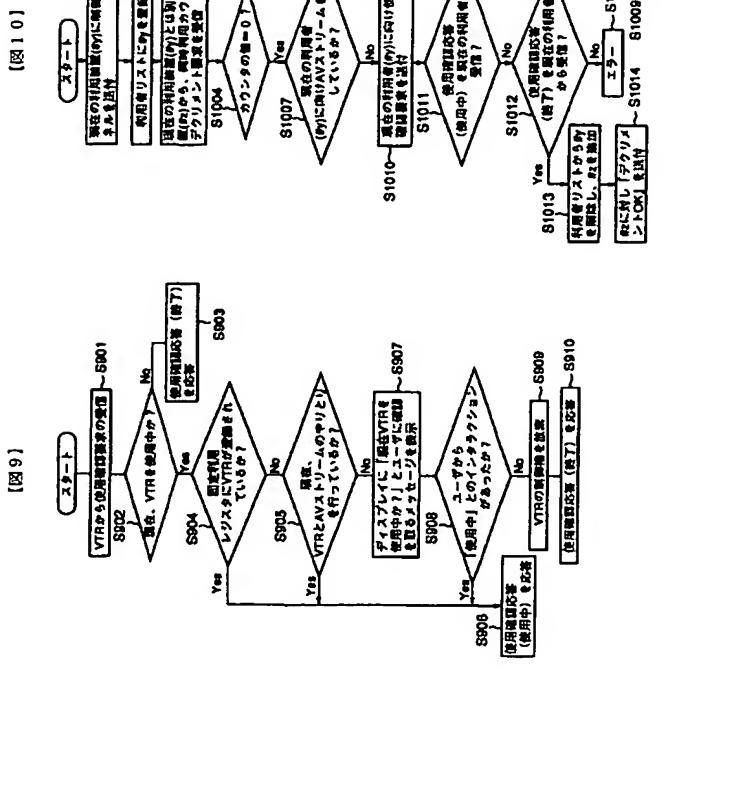
[0103]

The TV102 that has received this determines that "it is necessary to start up the VTR" since the VTR has not been started up at this time (the TV102 has no control right for controlling the VTR). Then, as in Embodiment 1, the simultaneous usage counter

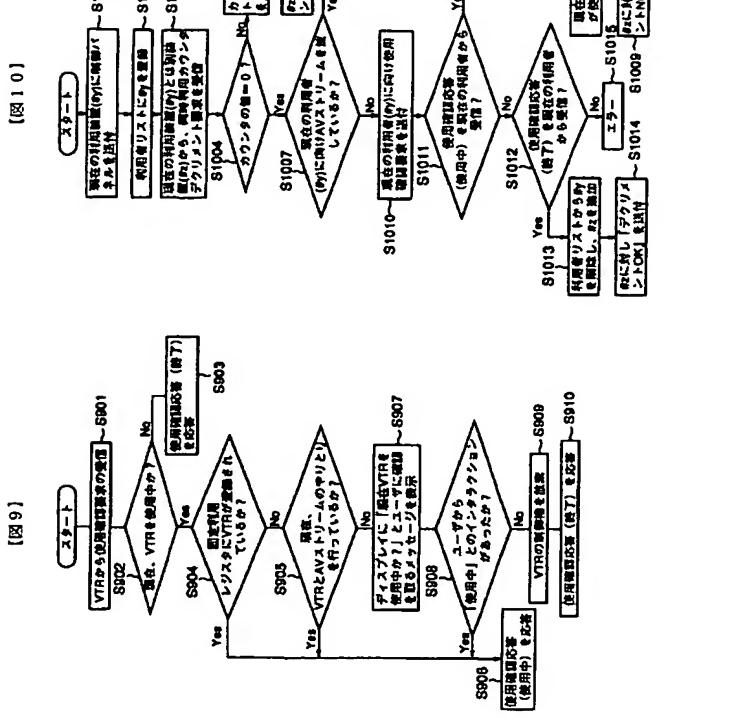
decrement (S1813) is transmitted and the replay command (S1816) is subsequently transmitted in case where the simultaneous usage counter decrement is successfully transmitted (S1816). During this time, the TV102 (#y indicative of a node ID of the TV102) may be added to the user list of the VTR.



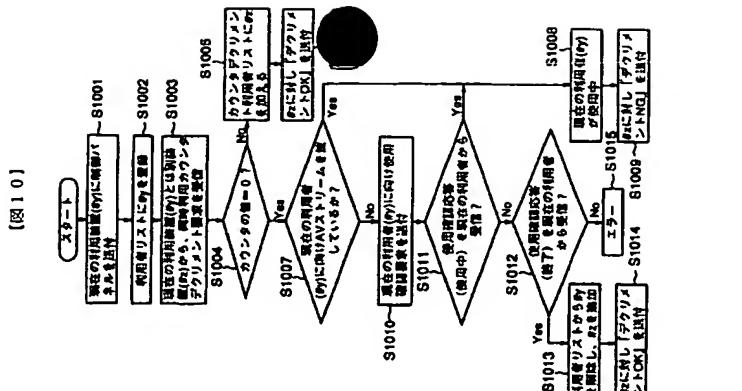
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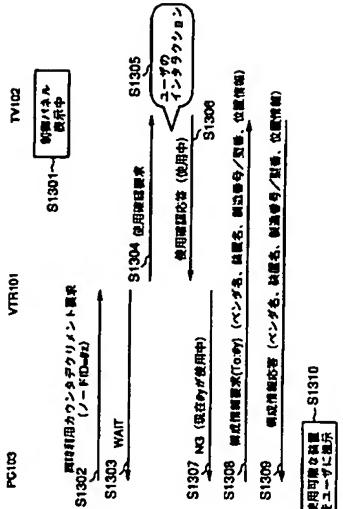
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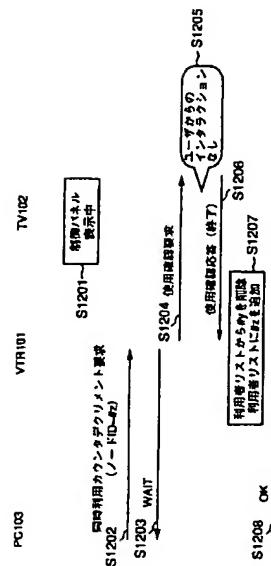
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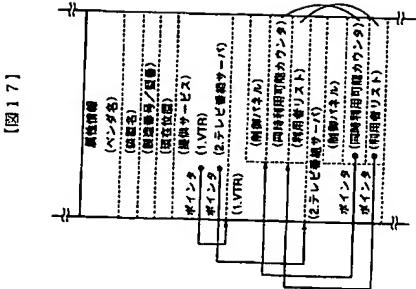
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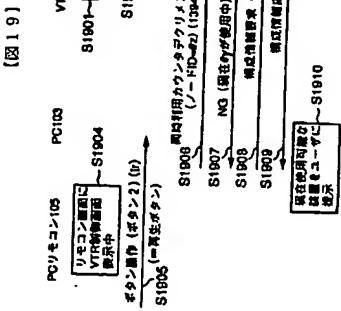
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